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ABSTRACT

Parental involvement is critical to a child's success in school. This handbook provides parents with information about the Grade 7 curriculum in Alberta, Canada. Based on the Alberta Education "Program of Studies: Junior High Schools," the handbook describes the knowledge, skills, and attitudes students in Alberta are expected to demonstrate when they have completed the Grade 7 curriculum, including samples of what students are expected to learn in each subject. Following introductory material, sections include: (1) "What Is Curriculum?"; (2) "Language Arts"; (3) "Mathematics"; (4) "Science"; (5) "Social Studies"; (6) "Physical Education"; (7) "Health and Personal Life Skills"; (8) "Complementary Courses," including Career and Technology Studies, Fine and Performing Arts, and Languages Other Than English; and (9) "French Immersion." The handbook concludes with a one-page questionnaire asking for feedback on the handbook. (LPP)

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# Curriculum Handbook *for* Parents

1997–1998

GRADE 7

PS 025727

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# Curriculum Handbook *for* **Parents**

**1997–1998**

GRADE **7**

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## *Message from the*
## Minister of Education

While students are at the centre of the education system, you, as parents are a vital partner. Your involvement in your child's education is critical to his or her success. To be the pathfinder, to help your child, you need to know what s/he is learning and when.

The *Curriculum Handbook for Parents* series is your guide to each stage of learning. It is a clear outline of what we expect our students to learn at each stage of their education. When you know what is expected at school, you can provide the home support students need. By reading about what your student is learning at school and discussing it at home, you do more than learn what is happening at school. You show your child that you value education.

This is the second edition of the handbook series. It reflects suggestions of parents, teachers and other education partners. I would like to thank those people whose comments helped us improve this edition.

I also would like to thank the eight school boards who worked on the development of the original handbooks – Edmonton Public, Edmonton Separate, Elk Island, Sturgeon, St. Albert Protestant, Greater St. Albert Catholic, Sherwood Park Separate and Black Gold.

Gary G. Mar, Q.C.
Minister of Education
M.L.A., Calgary Nose Creek


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# *Introduction to the Grade 7 Handbook*

This handbook provides parents with information about the Grade 7 curriculum—the knowledge, skills and attitudes students in Alberta are expected to demonstrate when they have completed the Grade 7 curriculum. It is based on the Alberta Education *Program of Studies: Junior High Schools*. The handbook includes samples of what students are expected to learn in each subject. The complete curriculum for Grade 7 is available in all Alberta junior high schools.




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# *Introduction*

## TO THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Alberta Education specifies what all students in Grade 7 to Grade 9 are expected to learn and be able to do. The curriculum is organized into separate subjects or course areas and is designed to enable teachers to make connections across subjects, and to develop programming that accommodates a range of student needs. We expect that teaching methods and schedules will vary from school to school and from class to class to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

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# *What Is Curriculum?*

Curriculum describes what students are expected to learn. In Alberta, curriculum is developed by Alberta Education and is described in documents called programs of study for elementary, junior high and senior high schools.

The curriculum specifies what all students in the province are expected to learn in each subject area at each grade level. It is developed by Alberta Education in consultation with teachers, administrators, parents, representatives from post-secondary institutions, and professional and community groups.

Teachers are responsible for using the curriculum to plan their teaching activities and set appropriate levels of challenge according to students' learning needs and abilities. Teachers regularly assess student progress and report to parents, students and school administrators.

As well as being assessed by their teachers, students write provincial achievement tests in grades 3, 6 and 9. Grade 3 students write achievement tests in language arts and mathematics. Grades 6 and 9 students write achievement tests in language arts, social studies, mathematics and science. The results of these achievement tests are provided to school boards and schools. Parents may ask for their child's test results at their local school.

Information about provincial achievement testing in grades 3, 6 and 9 is provided in an Alberta Education publication called, *Parent Guide to Provincial Achievement Testing*. Individual guides for Grade 3 and for Grade 6 are available in elementary schools. The Grade 9 guide is available in junior high schools. The publications also may be obtained from Alberta Education's Student Evaluation Branch by calling 403–427–0010 or, outside of Edmonton, dial 310–0000 to be connected toll free.


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# Language Arts

In language arts, students will demonstrate increasing confidence in their abilities and competence in their use of language. Language arts emphasizes the lifelong application of reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing. The five strands are interrelated and enable students to communicate ideas and feelings, develop critical thinking skills, and contribute to their social and personal growth. The five language arts strands are integrated in a variety of themes and units. From grade to grade, students extend and refine the language skills they have already learned. Opportunities are provided for students to practise those skills in new contexts, using more challenging learning materials.

## Reading

***By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:***

- use and develop strategies for getting meaning from text that will enable them to predict, sample and confirm or correct their predictions as they read meaningful passages
- recognize that reading rate should vary depending on the reader's purpose and the complexity of the material
- ask questions based on their individual responses to what they read and respond to their own questions
- recognize and use different organizational patterns in fiction and nonfiction, such as chronological order and cause and effect.

## Writing

***By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:***

- choose a topic and select ideas for developing their writing
- demonstrate an ability to organize their writing for familiar audiences, such as friends, parents and teachers
- demonstrate increasing skill in including ideas relevant to the topic in the development of their writing
- use writing in all subject areas, not only to demonstrate knowledge, but also to discover what is known and to extend and clarify knowledge.


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## Listening

***By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:***

- use and develop strategies for paying attention to, and getting meaning from, the message in listening situations
- develop awareness of accents and dialects in order to become more sensitive and understanding in reacting to the speech of others
- understand that the electronic media influences everyday life and be sensitive to the effects the media can have on a listener
- use knowledge of the speaker, knowledge of the subject and knowledge of the way the speaker has organized his or her talk to predict a speaker's purpose.

## Speaking

***By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:***

- develop competence in speaking to classroom groups to convey thoughts, feelings and information
- use group discussion to prepare for reading and in personal and critical responses to literature
- recognize obvious factors that impair group discussion, such as straying off topic, interruptions or one person dominating the discussion
- speculate on personal experiences and the experiences of others.

## Viewing

***By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:***

- develop an increasing ability to observe subtle aspects of the visual message that enhance its impact; for example, colour and shape of print
- recognize the difference between fact and fantasy in media portrayal of everyday life
- identify and understand the purposes, message and intended audience of visual communications; for example, advertising
- use their own knowledge and experience to help them understand and respond to visual messages.


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# Mathematics

Mathematics is a co nmon human activity, increasing in importance in a rapidly advanci ng, technological society. A greater proficiency in using mathematics increases the opportunities available to individuals. Studen s need to become mathematically literate in order to explore prot lem-solving situations.

At all levels, students benefit from working with appropriate materials, tools and contexts when constructing personal meaning about new mathematical ideas.

The main goals of mathematics education are to prepare students to:

- use mathematics confidently to solve problems
- communicate and reason mathematically
- appreciate and value mathematics
- commit themselves to lifelong learning
- become mathematically literate adults, using mathematics to contribute to society.

As students acquire the specified outcomes, they will also be expected to use the following seven mathematical processes:

Communication
Connections
Estimation and Mental Mathematics
Problem Solving
Reasoning
Technology
Visualization.

The mathematics content is organized into four strands:

Number
Patterns and Relations
Shape and Space
Statistics and Probability.

## Number

***By the end of Grade 7, students will:***

- Demonstrate a number sense for decimals and integers, including whole numbers.

Sample Student Tasks

- The Sun has a diameter of about 1 382 400 km and is about 148 640 000 km from Earth.
  Write these numbers in the following two forms:
  using expanded notation with powers of 10 and kilometres as units of length
  using scientific notation and kilometres as units of length.
  For what kind of numbers is the use of scientific notation most appropriate?
  How are the numbers affected, if metres are used as units of length?

- Carl saved his money and bought a mountain bike. His dad had given him $179.49, which was half the cost of the bike. Carl wrote a cheque for the full cost. Show how he wrote the amount in words and in numbers on the cheque.

- Explain how you could order the following numbers from least to greatest, using a number line with the benchmarks of $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1.

  $\frac{3}{7}, 1\frac{1}{3}, \frac{5}{9}, \frac{13}{12}, 1\frac{4}{9}$

- Bart used his calculator to express the following fractions as decimals:

  $\frac{1}{9} = 0.111\ldots$

  $\frac{2}{9} = 0.222\ldots$

  $\frac{3}{9} = 0.333\ldots$

  Predict the decimals for $\frac{4}{9}$ and $\frac{7}{9}$.

  Predict what fraction will have 0.888 ... as a decimal.
  Check your predictions on your calculator.
  Can you explain the pattern in words?

- Temperatures at a variety of places across Canada at 3:00 p.m. on a certain day were as follows:
  +8°C, –3°C, –7°C, 0°C, +3°C, –12°C, +10°C.
  Arrange the temperatures from lowest to highest.


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◆ Apply arithmetic operations on decimals and integers, and illustrate their use in solving problems.

Sample Student Tasks

- Show how you can use two different coloured cubes to represent the following numbers, and combine them.
  $^{+}10 + {}^{-}6$
  $^{-}4 + {}^{-}7$
  $^{-}8 + {}^{+}5$

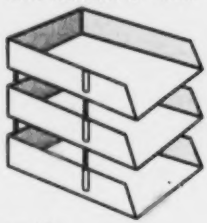
- Determine the missing operation signs so that the following statement is true.
  $(7.4 \square 2.1) \square 14 = 1.11$

◆ Illustrate the use of rates, ratios, percentages and decimals in solving problems.

Sample Student Tasks

- Almost 14% of Canada's land surface is covered by wetlands. If Canada's land surface is 1020 million hectares, how many hectares are covered by wetlands?

- Stacks of filing trays can be made by spacing the trays with riser rods. Four riser rods are needed for each space between the trays.
  How many riser rods are needed for a stack of:
  3 trays?
  6 trays?
  Write a formula for the number of riser rods ($r$) in terms of the number of trays ($t$).



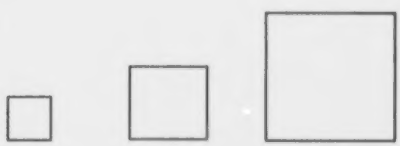
## Patterns and Relations

***By the end of Grade 7, students will:***

◆ Express patterns, including those used in business and industry, in terms of variables, and use expressions containing variables to make predictions.

Sample Student Tasks

- Measure the sides of each of the squares provided.
  Find the perimeter of each square.
  Make a graph by plotting the length of the sides on the horizontal axis and the perimeters on the vertical axis.
  Describe the pattern in the graph.
  From the results of this graph, make a rule for finding the perimeter of a square.
  Explain how you could verify your rule.

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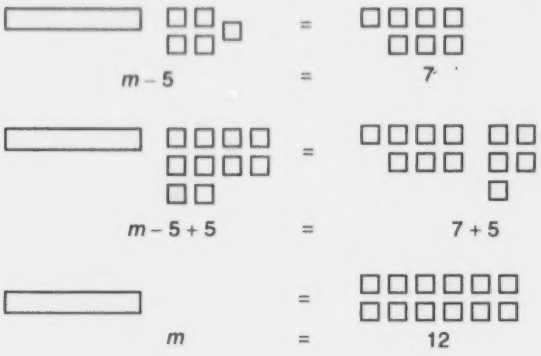
◆ Use variables and equations to express, summarize and apply relationships as problem-solving tools in a restricted range of contexts.

Sample Student Tasks

- An expression for the mass of two cans and five marbles is $2c + 5m$. Find the total mass, if each can has a mass of 200 g and each marble a mass of 75 g.
- Sharon had some money; she spent $5, and then she had $7 left. How much money did Sharon have to begin with?

  Ted wrote the equation $m - 5 = 7$ and used algebra tiles to solve it.




Sharon had $12 to begin with.

Use Ted's method to solve:
Barb had some sports cards. She sold 6 and then she had 10 left. How many did she have to start with?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## Shape and Space

***By the end of Grade 7, students will:***

◆ Solve problems involving the properties of circles and their connections with angles and time zones.

Sample Student Tasks

- Gunther gathered a variety of circular objects, such as container lids and wheels. For each object, he measured the diameter with calipers and the circumference with a tape measure. He started making this chart:

| Object | Diameter (cm) | Circumference (cm) | Relationship between Diameter and Circumference |
|---|---|---|---|
| nut can lid | | | |
| bicycle wheel | | | |
| oatmeal container | | | |

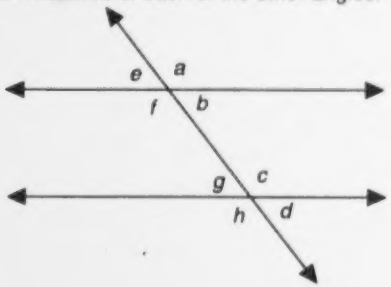
He noticed a pattern in how the two measures for each object were related.
Estimate the relationship between diameter and circumference.
Test it by measuring the diameter of another object and predicting the circumference before measuring it.
Use your calculator to find the relationship in each case.
Make a rule that relates the diameter and circumference of a circle.

- If you left Vancouver at 8:25 a.m. (Pacific Time) and arrived in Winnipeg at 1:40 p.m. (Central Time), how long was your flight?

◆ Link angle measures to the properties of parallel lines.

Sample Student Tasks

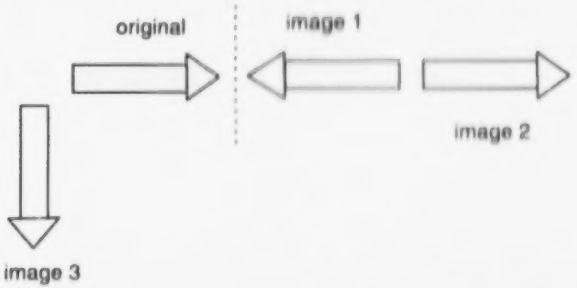
- If *a* is 100°, calculate the measures of each of the other angles. Justify each calculation.



- Create and analyze patterns and designs, using congruence, symmetry, translation, rotation and reflection.

Sample Student Tasks

- The picture below shows three images of an arrow. Identify each transformation and explain how the image is the same and how it is different from the original figure.




- A triangle has vertices (3, 2), (6, 2) and (6, 4). It is flipped into the second quadrant with the *y*-axis as the mirror line. This image is flipped into the third quadrant with the *x*-axis as the mirror line; and this image is flipped into the fourth quadrant with the *y*-axis as the mirror line. Draw the three images and give the coordinates of each vertex of each triangle.

## Statistics and Probability

***By the end of Grade 7, students will:***

- Develop and implement a plan for the collection, display and analysis of data, using measures of variability and central tendency.

Sample Student Tasks

- For each of these questions:
  Is there a relationship between wrist circumference and height?
  Does smoking cause lung cancer?
  Does pet ownership enhance the quality of life for senior citizens?
  Explain what would be the most appropriate methods for collecting data.
  Identify potential ethical problems, need for sensitivity to personal and cultural beliefs, and cost when designing questions and collecting data.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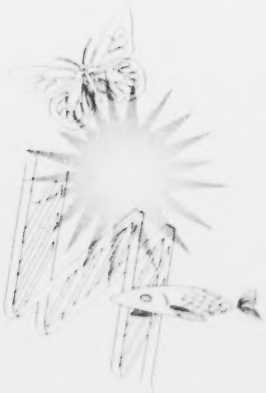
- Keep a record of all your activities in a typical school day (24 h).
  Decide on categories for which the activities can be reported in number of hours (sleeping is an activity).
  Make a circle graph to show your typical school day.
  Share and compare graphs with other students.
  How can someone else's graph be useful to you?

◆ Create and solve problems, using probability.

Sample Student Tasks

- For a picnic, Rosanna prepared some ham, some chicken and some cheese sandwiches. She also wrapped pieces of apple and cherry pie. Pauloosi picked a sandwich and a piece of pie.
  Make a table to show all the possible combinations of sandwich and pie that Pauloosi could have picked.
  Rosanna prepared 5 ham sandwiches, 6 chicken sandwiches and 4 cheese sandwiches. Pauloosi's favourite sandwich is chicken. If he chooses a sandwich without looking, what is the probability that it is chicken?

# Science



In science, students develop knowledge and skills that help them understand and interpret the world around them. At each level of the junior high program, students learn basic concepts from earth, physical and life sciences, and are challenged to apply what they have learned. Through their studies, students are expected to develop skills of inquiry and experimentation, skills of solving practical problems, and skills of finding and evaluating information.

The Grade 7 program consists of six units of study. Each unit focuses on a particular topic and develops three common themes:

- Nature of Science
- Science and Technology
- Science, Technology and Society.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The units of study are:

- Characteristics of Living Things
- Structures and Design
- Force and Motion
- Temperature and Heat Measurement
- Micro-organisms and Food Supplies
- Evidence of Erosion.

## Characteristics of Living Things

Students study living things, focusing on life cycles, adaptations and examples of stimulus-response. Inquiry skills emphasized in this unit are observing, classifying, designing experiments and interpreting results.

### *By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:*

- be aware of techniques for monitoring life functions; for example, measuring pulse and breathing rate
- identify and control variables in a simple experiment
- classify materials as living and nonliving
- infer the relationship of living things to their environments; for example, identify adaptations of animals that live in ponds
- identify and describe similarities between groups of living things; for example, compare birds and mammals
- describe and compare different life cycles; for example, life cycle of a frog and of a fish
- identify examples of adaptive structures; for example, specialized beaks of birds
- distinguish between instinctive and learned responses; for example, migration versus learning the location of specific food sources.

## Structures and Design

Students learn about the purpose and design of structures, the selection of materials and the nature of different designs. They also develop skills of planning, constructing and evaluating.

### *By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:*

- develop awareness and appreciation of the role of safety in good design
- identify alternative design solutions
- test a design by constructing a load-bearing prototype, using materials such as cardboard or wood
- evaluate the planning process
- recognize stems and skeletons as structural components of living things


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- infer and describe the function of human-made structures
- recognize the relationship between choice of materials and the design used
- describe the function of different kinds of hinged components
- recognize costs to be considered in design decisions
- identify differences in requirements of structures built on earth and in space.

## Force and Motion

Students study a variety of forces, learning how to recognize, measure and describe their effects. They learn about the causes and effects of friction and about motion in space.

***By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:***

- observe the effects of forces
- appreciate current technologies used in measuring force and mass
- predict consequences of forces; for example, predict changes in movement
- identify patterns and trends; for example, recognize how the length of a spring varies with the force
- infer force and motion relationships
- describe the direction of a force
- recognize and use units of force; for example, Newtons
- distinguish between mass and weight; for example, recognize that an astronaut's weight changes with location but that the mass does not
- identify factors that affect friction; for example, surface roughness.

## Temperature and Heat Measurement

Students learn about the effects of heat on materials, and how to apply this knowledge to heat and measurement. Students learn about the nature of heat and its sources.

***By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:***

- respect precision in measurement
- identify and ask relevant questions
- observe the effects of heat on material
- develop theoretical explanations for the effects of heat on different materials
- describe temperature of materials in descriptive and nonquantitative terms
- calibrate a thermometer
- estimate temperature of materials in degrees Celsius
- describe the components of liquid thermometers and the functions of those liquids
- distinguish between the concept of temperature and the concept of heat
- recognize that different fuels may have different heat energy content.


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## Micro-organisms and Food Supplies

Students learn ways of preserving food supplies for human consumption. They learn about micro-organisms, the environments in which micro-organisms live, and methods to prepare and preserve food safely. They also study how scientific knowledge is used to make personal and public decisions.

### *By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:*

- recognize the need for safety standards to prevent the spread of disease through food
- identify alternative ways to handle and process food; for example, drying, canning and pickling
- demonstrate responsibility through personal action
- identify practical difficulties in managing food supplies; for example, storing perishable foods for long periods of time
- describe variations in size, shape and movement of micro-organisms
- describe changes in food materials as they support the growth of a mould culture
- identify unsafe food handling procedures
- describe personal actions in ensuring the safety of personal food supplies.

## Evidence of Erosion

Students learn about changes in the surface of the earth that result from erosion, transport and deposition of earth materials. Through this unit, students also learn about how scientific knowledge is developed and applied.

### *By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:*

- appreciate the impact of people on the physical earth
- measure the depth of sediments and the rates of stream flow
- infer causes of phenomena observed; for example, recognize evidence of glacial action
- recognize evidence of weathering; for example, recognize that steeply sloping river banks are a sign of erosion at work
- identify wind, water and ice as agents of erosion
- observe and interpret the porosity of different earth materials
- identify the range and location of glaciers, past and present
- recognize and describe methods for controlling erosion.


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# Social Studies

Social studies helps students to learn basic knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to become responsible citizens and contributing members of society. Social studies includes the study of history, geography, economics, the behavioural sciences and humanities. Grade 7 social studies focuses on people and their culture. The content is organized around three topics that serve as the context for developing important skills and attitudes. In each topic, students are expected to address at least one issue and one question for inquiry. Suggestions for this inquiry are provided within the curriculum.

***Three topics are identified for Grade 7.***

## Culture

To develop an understanding of culture, students will study culture in their own immediate environment: home, school and community. Based on this experience, students will develop a basic understanding of their culture that will help in the study of any culture.

***By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:***

- understand that communication in all its forms is how culture is learned
- understand that socialization is achieved through interaction with others
- understand that beliefs and values influence behaviour
- understand that individuals assume a variety of roles
- identify possible sources of information
- differentiate between main and related ideas
- draw conclusions about basic aspects of culture
- construct a retrieval chart outlining the major aspects of culture
- develop respect for the rights, needs, opinions and concerns of self and others


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## Cultural Transition: A Case Study of Japan

To help them understand cultural transition, students will study the changes that have occurred in the Japanese culture in the past century.

***By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:***

- understand that change results from one or a combination of causes
- understand that change is a continuous process occurring unevenly within cultures
- understand that some aspects of culture are more enduring than others
- identify points of view expressed in cartoons, pictures or photographs
- read and interpret maps to identify relationships between geography and Japanese culture
- draw conclusions about cultural transition in Japan
- construct a chart outlining the major aspects of Japanese culture
- develop empathy for people experiencing change.

## Canada: A Bilingual and Multicultural Country

Students develop an understanding of the bilingual and of the multicultural nature of Canada. They study this topic, using the basic understanding of culture learned in the unit on culture. They will examine a variety of cultural groups, one of which will be Metis, Indian or Inuit.

***By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:***

- understand that cultural heritage is part of an individual's identity
- understand that Canada's population is made up of a variety of cultural groups
- understand that bilingualism recognizes the existence of two official languages
- understand that multiculturalism supports the existence of cultural diversity
- read and interpret maps to illustrate the various nations from which many Canadians or their ancestors immigrated
- understand bilingualism and multiculturalism in Canada well enough to discuss the general concepts and relationships
- identify and evaluate alternative answers, conclusions, solutions or decisions regarding questions and issues for inquiry and research on bilingualism and multiculturalism in Canada
- develop respect and tolerance for the rights, needs, opinions and concerns of others
- develop respect for the bilingual and multicultural nature of Canada.


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# Physical Education

Physical education programs foster active, healthful lifestyles that enable students to recognize the importance of accepting responsibility for their physical, social and emotional well-being. Students in a well-balanced physical education program are expected to be provided with opportunities in seven dimensions of activity: aquatics, dance, fitness, games, gymnastics, individual activities and outdoor pursuits. The expectations for physical education are the same for students in grades 7, 8 and 9. Students are expected to demonstrate increased levels of performance during their three years in junior high school. As well as demonstrating the expectations in the seven activities, students are expected to demonstrate:

- physical skills in a variety of activities
- the practice and theory of physical fitness
- knowledge about physical activity and healthful lifestyles
- positive attitudes toward active living
- positive social skills.

Consideration for exemption from participation in physical education is given for health issues, physical capabilities, religious preferences, cultural preferences and availability of facilities.

## Aquatics

***Students are expected to:***

- feel comfortable and confident in the water
- swim a variety of distances and take part in water games and sports
- understand and use safety and lifesaving skills
- develop appreciation and respect for the water environment.

At least one exposure to a water and water safety program is suggested during the secondary years.

## Dance

***Students are expected to:***

- develop body and space awareness and quality of movement
- create and perform individual, partner and/or group compositions
- analyze the various elements of rhythmical movement in dance
- appreciate the opportunities for self-expression, creativity, physical fitness and social interaction provided through dance
- appreciate dance as an enjoyable lifetime activity.

## Fitness

***Students are expected to:***

- assess and apply acceptable training principles in designing personal programs to improve cardiorespiratory efficiency, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, body composition and posture
- improve the motor fitness components of agility, balance, coordination, power, reaction time and speed
- plan, monitor and participate in a personal fitness program
- understand the safety precautions common to fitness activities
- understand the relationship of nutrition, rest, relaxation, exercise and sports to physical fitness
- know and apply the principles of first aid.

## Games

***Students are expected to:***

- use sound mechanical principles efficiently in the throwing, catching and holding on to objects in game conditions
- understand rules, etiquette and safety precautions associated with a variety of games
- understand and appreciate etiquette and self-control in game situations
- appreciate the necessity to accept the roles of leader and follower in cooperative and competitive situations
- develop confidence and a desire to attempt new games or activities.


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## Gymnastics

***Students are expected to:***

- perform movements that result in balanced body strength and mobility
- use correct safety techniques where individual and/or cooperative assistance is required
- participate, willingly, as a performer and/or organizer of class events.

## Individual Activities

***Students are expected to:***

- develop basic skills, techniques and forms associated with individual activities
- use acquired physical skills in a variety of individual activities
- monitor self-improvement and set personal goals in various individual activities
- care for the safety, effort and ability of self, partners, officials and instructors
- develop confidence and a desire to try new individual activities.

## Outdoor Pursuits

***Students are expected to:***

- develop the basic skills, techniques and forms associated with outdoor pursuits
- develop an awareness of the natural environment for worthwhile, lifetime outdoor pursuits in all seasons
- develop social skills that promote acceptable standards of behaviour and positive relationships with others
- develop increased confidence, self-sufficiency and individual initiative.


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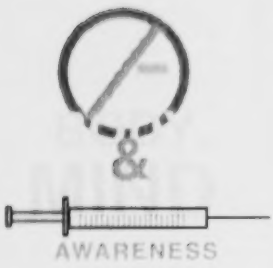
# Health and Personal Life Skills




Each person begins life with unique characteristics, capabilities, limitations and the potential to grow as a person. A health program that encompasses the multidimensional nature of the person helps students recognize their potential and become aware of alternatives that will enhance their personal lifestyle.

The Health and Personal Life Skills program encourages the involvement of community agencies. To promote accurate information exchange and to encourage ongoing health education, it is important to involve parents and community resource people in the health program. Health education is a responsibility shared with the home, school and community.

The Health and Personal Life Skills curriculum is arranged around themes. While the themes are repeated throughout the junior high program, the focus and content are different in each grade.

## Self-awareness and Acceptance

Students are provided the opportunity to develop attitudes of self-awareness and acceptance.

***By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:***

- understand the nature of self-concept
- understand the nature of feelings
- understand the relationship between values and decisions.

## Relating to Others

Students learn that interpersonal relationship skills help individuals make decisions about behaviour that allow them to feel good about themselves and function positively within their environment.

***By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:***

- understand and appreciate their relationship with friends
- understand and appreciate their relationship with family members.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## Life Careers

Students consider their personal interests, aptitudes and abilities in relation to career awareness and personal career planning.

### *By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:*

- understand how personal and societal needs may be met through work
- understand that career planning is a lifelong process
- understand the relationship between individual characteristics, career development and personal satisfaction.

## Body Knowledge and Care

Students acquire the knowledge and skills to help them make effective decisions and to care for their body.

### *By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:*

- understand the relationship between lifestyle, health and individual responsibility for achieving wellness
- understand the importance of safety and emergency procedures when dealing with emergencies or injuries
- understand the need for accurate information when making decisions regarding drug use and lifestyle choices
- understand basic drug information relevant to adolescents.

## Human Sexuality

This theme emphasizes the individual nature of change, growth and the importance of one's family and personal values with respect to sexuality and sexual decision making.

### *By the end of Grade 7, students are expected to:*

- understand and accept the stages and levels of physical and emotional/personal development that occur during puberty
- understand the process of reproduction
- understand alternatives to pregnancy.

Alberta Education requires that all schools offer the Human Sexuality theme of the Health program. Parents will be notified when this theme will be offered. Parents decide if their child will participate in the human sexuality component.


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# Complementary Courses

In addition to required courses, junior high schools are required to offer two provincially authorized complementary courses. Complementary courses are offered in the areas of career and technology studies, environmental and outdoor education, fine and performing arts, religious or ethical studies, and languages other than English. The range of complementary courses offered varies from school to school dependent on such factors as student and parent preferences, facilities and staffing. Complementary courses are designed to reinforce the learning in required courses, and to provide opportunities for students to explore areas of interest and areas related to potential careers.

# Career and Technology Studies

Career and Technology Studies (CTS) provides students with practical, hands-on learning experiences in the area of personal interest, general career exploration and applied technology. In CTS, students have the opportunity to use and apply technology effectively and efficiently to solve problems and produce usable products within a personally relevant career context.

The Career and Technology Studies program is organized into strands and modules. Schools select from 22 strands those modules that are most relevant for the students and the community. A strand is a group of modules that support a wide range of career and occupational opportunities within one particular category. A module defines what students should know and be able to do and, in general, takes about 25 hours to complete, although some students may need less or more time. Students progress through a sequence of modules completing more challenging projects and activities as they go. In senior high school, students can build on what they learned in junior high school, developing career-specific skills that will help them make a smooth transition into adult roles in the family, community, workplace or further education.

The 22 Career and Technology Studies program strands are:

- Agriculture
- Career Transitions
- Communication Technology
- Community Health
- Construction Technologies
- Cosmetology
- Design Studies
- Electro-Technologies
- Energy and Mines
- Enterprise and Innovation
- Fabrication Studies
- Fashion Studies
- Financial Management
- Foods
- Forestry
- Information Processing
- Legal Studies
- Logistics
- Management and Marketing
- Mechanics
- Tourism Studies
- Wildlife


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The CTS program offered in each school will vary depending on student and parent wishes, staff and facilities. Parents are encouraged to visit their local school to determine which CTS modules are being offered.

***Students in Career and Technology Studies are expected to:***

- develop skills that they can apply in their daily lives now and in the future
- refine career planning skills
- develop technology-related skills
- enhance employability skills
- apply and reinforce learnings developed in other subject areas.

# Fine and Performing Arts

## Art

In art, students are expected to learn how to express their personal feelings and intuitions and to become art critics. To achieve this, students are expected to use traditional and contemporary tools, materials and media, to think like artists, to value the art creation, and to value the art form. The expectations for art are the same for students in grades 7, 8 and 9. Students are expected to demonstrate increased levels of performance during the three years in junior high school.

Three areas—drawings, compositions and encounters, provide the framework for the junior high art program.

***By using a variety of materials and techniques, students are expected to:***

- depict the visual world through drawing, painting and sculpting
- increase technical competencies in drawing, painting and sculpting
- develop competencies in composition and use of multiple media
- develop a vocabulary for critiquing their art work in a positive way
- use the proper vocabulary of art criticism
- investigate natural forms and man-made structures as source subjects
- compare natural and man-made artifacts
- understand the impact of artistic expression on cultures and across cultures.


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## Drama

Drama encourages students to explore a variety of dramatic roles and develop a range of dramatic skills. Students set up a dramatic situation, act out the situation and reflect on the consequences. It is this reflection that provides the knowledge for self-development and improved performance. Through the five disciplines in the junior high drama program, students learn about the different forms and standards of drama and theatre.

### *The five disciplines are:*

- **movement** – physical, nonverbal expression
- **speech** – exploration of talking and speaking to effectively communicate ideas
- **improvisation/acting** – acting out of an idea or situation
- **theatre studies** – an introduction to the elements of drama and theatre
- **technical theatre** – stage construction and the use of sound, lighting, makeup, costumes, sets and props.

## Music

Instrumental music, choral music and general music are the three distinct, yet related, programs in the junior high music curriculum. Development in any of these programs requires student involvement as a performer, listener and composer.

The **instrumental** music program is designed to be a sequential and developmental approach to music instruction in either a wind percussion program or strings program.

The **choral** music program provides opportunities for students to develop and increase musical competency through singing, listening, creating and reading music.

The **general** music program covers a wide variety of musical areas from composition to performance, history and the basics of music.

### *The five main goals of junior high music are to enable students to:*

- develop skills in listening, performing and reading music
- strive for musical excellence
- understand, evaluate and appreciate a variety of music styles
- develop self-expression, creativity and communication through music
- increase their awareness of the history of music and the role of music in their lives.


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# Languages Other Than English

## French as a Second Language

In Alberta, French as a Second Language (FSL) is a program in which the French language is taught as a subject, often between 20 and 40 minutes a day, to help students develop communication skills, language knowledge and cultural awareness in French.

Depending upon a school board's language policy, French as a Second Language in junior high schools may be offered as an optional program or it may be a compulsory program. School boards may begin the program at different grade levels, since the program is based on developing language proficiency over a grade or grades without being grade specific. Many schools start the elementary program in Grade 4, but others may not begin until Grade 7 or later.

The program is designed to teach students how to understand what they hear and read in French, and to communicate their ideas orally and in written form, using an approach that is based on real-life experiences and situations. Students will also acquire knowledge about local, provincial and national francophone groups to become more aware of their presence and to better understand them. Students learn the French language vocabulary and grammar through thematic activities and projects that are related to real-life language experiences. At the same time, students are taught specific language learning strategies that will help them become better second language learners.

The program is organized into three language proficiency levels—Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced. Each of these proficiency levels is then further divided into three sublevels. In junior high schools, students start at the Beginning Level and progress through the Beginning 1, Beginning 2 and Beginning 3 sublevels. It could take students one or more school years to reach a particular language proficiency level, depending upon when the students start the program and how much time is given to French instruction in the school.

Students entering junior high school may either begin their French language experience or they can continue developing their language proficiency, depending upon the level that was attained in elementary school.


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***For those starting French in junior high, the language content is based upon the concrete experiences of junior high students. These experiences provide a real-life context for understanding ideas in French and for communicating similar ideas. Each level has its own set of experiences that fall into the following areas:***

**Beginning 1**

- School
- People Around Us
- Weather
- Animals
- Holidays and Celebrations

**Beginning 2**

- Community
- Clothing
- Exercise
- Food
- Housing

**Beginning 3**

- Activities
- Vacations
- Fine Arts
- Trades and Professions
- Hygiene and Safety

As students work through these experiences, they develop their ability to understand and communicate in French. At the end of each level, the students must demonstrate the following knowledge and skills:

**Beginning 1**

The ability to understand simple ideas contained in listening texts, such as the temperature in a weather forecast.

The ability to talk about concrete ideas, using simple sentences to identify, list or describe people, places or things, and to ask simple questions. For example, students could talk about their family by naming the members of the family, giving their ages and birthdays.

**Beginning 2**

The ability to understand simple ideas contained in listening texts, such as understanding directions to the corner store, and to understand simple reading texts, such as understanding the main food items on a menu.

The ability to talk and write about concrete ideas, using simple sentences to identify, list or describe people, places or things, and to ask simple questions. For example, students could provide their address, telephone number and order pizza over the telephone. They could also write a simple note to describe their house to a pen pal.

**Beginning 3**

The ability to understand simple ideas contained in listening texts, such as a recorded message of flight departure times, and to understand simple reading texts, such as the safety rules on a safety week poster.

The ability to talk and write about concrete ideas, using a number of simple sentences to identify, list or describe people, places or things, ask simple questions, give information and simple advice. For example, students could telephone a travel agency to ask for prices for different travel destinations. They could also write a simple announcement for the school's Night of Music concert to promote it in the community.

Once students have attained a Beginning Level 3 language proficiency, they then move into the next proficiency level, which is Intermediate Level 4.


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***At the Intermediate level, the following set of language experiences are developed:***

**Intermediate 4**

- Health and Exercise
- Holidays and Celebrations
- Clubs and Associations
- Shopping
- Senses and Feelings

**Intermediate 5**

- Close Friends
- Fashion
- Social Life
- Outdoor Activities
- Advertising

**Intermediate 6**

- World of Work
- Trips, Excursions or Student Exchanges
- Money
- Role of the Media
- Conservation and the Environment

At each of these levels, the students work through these experiences to continue developing their ability to understand and communicate in French.

***At the end of each level, the students must demonstrate the following knowledge and skills:***

**Intermediate 4**

The ability to understand main ideas and some details contained in listening and reading texts that are familiar and somewhat predictable, such as understanding some key ideas given in a radio program concerning someone's feelings, or understanding the main ideas and some details contained in travel brochures in order to decide which place would be the most appropriate for a school trip.

The ability to talk and write about concrete topics, using simple and complex sentences, to compare or describe people, places or things, or to give or ask for information or advice. For example, students could talk about their club on a radio talk show and invite people to join, or they could write about what they are feeling in a journal entry.

**Intermediate 5**

The ability to understand main ideas and most details contained in listening and reading texts that are familiar and somewhat predictable, such as understanding almost all of the key ideas and most details presented in a fashion show, or understanding all the main ideas and most of the details contained in an article discussing simple survival techniques.

The ability to talk and write about concrete topics, using simple and complex sentences, to compare or describe people, places or things, to give or ask for information or advice, or to narrate events in the past. For example, students could talk about their friends and what friendship means to them, or they could write a letter to a francophone pen pal.

**Intermediate 6**

The ability to understand all main ideas and almost all of the details contained in listening and reading texts that are somewhat familiar but less predictable, such as understanding almost all of the key ideas and most details presented in a televised interview on how to be successful in a job interview, or understanding all the main ideas and most of the details contained in an article discussing an environmental project.

The ability to talk and write about mostly concrete but sometimes abstract topics, using a series of simple and complex sentences, to compare or describe people, places or things, to give or ask for information or advice, or to narrate events in any tense. For example, students could simulate carrying out a job interview or they could write a formal letter to a company on its environmental practices.

Once students have attained the Intermediate 6 language proficiency level, they then move into the Advanced Level 7 in senior high school.


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## German

This is a two-year, German second language program for junior high school students and is designed to develop effective communication skills in German, as well as develop cultural awareness. It can be taken in Grade 7 and Grade 8, or in Grade 8 and Grade 9.

***Upon completion of the program, students are expected to:***

- demonstrate their understanding of familiar questions, statements and instructions
- speak with reasonably correct intonation, rhythm and pronunciation
- reply with an appropriate answer to commonly asked questions and simple questions
- participate in a simple conversation directed by the teacher
- read for specific information and ideas within the range of their personal learning experiences and interests
- write familiar German, by:
  - copying
  - writing phrases from memory and dictation
  - composing simple statements and questions
  - answering questions in a controlled or guided context
- demonstrate awareness of the cultural implications of certain common linguistic forms.

## Ukrainian

### Ukrainian Language Arts

Ukrainian Language Arts is offered as part of the Ukrainian bilingual program and is designed for native speakers of Ukrainian and for students who speak other languages and wish to learn Ukrainian. The bilingual program begins in Kindergarten and goes through to Grade 12.

***Students are expected to:***

- obtain specific information from teacher-selected sources
- recognize how to express personal feelings, ideas and opinions
- organize and present, effectively, information of interest to their peers
- share feelings; share and support ideas and opinions
- respond personally to a variety of literary forms
- use literature and other art forms to reflect creatively upon experiences of general interest
- recognize and be sensitive to differences or similarities in cultures
- recognize the contribution of the lifestyle of Ukrainians to the wider community.


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**Ukrainian as a Second Language, Six-year Program**

The Ukrainian as a Second Language, six-year program, is designed for students who wish to learn to communicate with others in Ukrainian and to preserve Ukrainian language and culture. The program begins in Grade 7 and goes through to Grade 12.

***Students are expected to:***

- use appropriate social conventions
- ask and tell who someone is, someone's name, what something is
- carry out commands
- express actions in the negative
- ask and tell where people and objects are located, where one lives, simple directions
- ask and tell what one wants to do or needs to do
- count from 1 to 100 and recognize, orally, the ordinal numbers 1 to 10
- ask and tell the parts of the day, days of the week, seasons of the year.

## Other Languages

Locally developed language courses are available for Arabic, German, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Polish and Spanish. Contact your school board office for information about which language programs it offers.

## Native Languages

Blackfoot and Cree language and culture programs are designed to enable students to learn Native languages and to increase awareness of Native cultures.

***Students are expected to:***

- learn basic communication skills in Blackfoot or Cree
- develop cultural sensitivity and enhance personal development
- develop originality and creativity
- develop a desire to improve their competency in Blackfoot or Cree.


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# Other

## Environmental and Outdoor Education

In environmental and outdoor education, students learn to understand the consequences of human actions on environments. The course can be offered as a single course or as a sequence of courses.

***Following completion of the course(s), students are expected to demonstrate:***

- the basic knowledge, skills and attitudes required for safe and comfortable experiences
- understanding, respect and appreciation for themselves and others
- awareness and appreciation of living things
- understanding of basic ecological processes
- skill, judgement, confidence and sensitivity in a range of environmentally responsible activities in outdoor settings
- the ability to investigate the effects of human lifestyles on environment
- lifestyle strategies that encourage responsibility for local and global environments.

## Ethics

The ethics course is designed to help students become contributing, ethical and mature persons. The aim of the course is to help students become more thoughtful, to think of the interests of others, and to see ethical implications in their daily lives.

***Students are expected to learn:***

- working definitions of ethics and values
- decision-making skills
- about historical values and traditions
- about values of different cultural groups
- about their responsibility to their community.

***Modules include:***

- Winning and Losing
- Fairness and the Law
- Religion and Values
- Messages in Media.

## Locally Developed Courses

School boards may develop courses to be innovative and responsive to local and individual needs. Contact the school to learn about locally developed courses available in your jurisdiction.


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# French Immersion

French immersion is a program in which French is the language of instruction for a significant part of the school day. This program is designed for students whose first language is not French. Several subjects, or possibly all of them when students are in grades 1 and 2, are taught in French. The curriculum is identical to that offered in the regular English program. The major difference is that it is taught in French.

In addition to learning what is identified for courses such as mathematics, science and health, French immersion students also want to acquire full mastery of the English language, functional fluency in French as well as an understanding and appreciation of the French culture. Graduates of a French immersion program are able and willing to participate with confidence and competence in French conversations on a variety of topics. Should they so wish, they are able to take further education as appropriate to their abilities and interests with French as the language of instruction. Finally, they are able to accept employment where French is the language of work.

French immersion students perform well in all subject areas on system-wide and provincial tests. This finding has been replicated many times not only in Alberta but across Canada.

A guide for parents of students in French Immersion, *Yes, You Can Help*, is available for purchase from the Learning Resources Distributing Centre at 403–427–2767 or, outside of Edmonton, dial 310–0000 to be connected toll free.


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# *Feedback*

## Curriculum Handbook for Parents

Grade 7

We would like to know what you think about this handbook. Are you a:

_____ Parent

_____ Teacher (please indicate level) ___ Division 1, ___ Division 2, ___ Division 3

_____ School Administrator (please indicate level) ___ Division 1, ___ Division 2, ___ Division 3

_____ District Administrator

_____ Other (please specify) _____

1. I found this document:

   _____ extremely useful

   _____ useful

   _____ somewhat useful

   _____ not very useful.

2. What could be done to make this document more useful?

   _____

   _____

3. Other comments and suggestions:

   _____

   _____

   _____

***Thank you for your feedback.***

***Please send your response to:***

**Director, Curriculum Standards Branch**
Alberta Education
11160 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 0L2
Fax: 403–422–3745

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